

The Almanack

Newsletter of the Huntingdonshire Local History Society

January 2019

Christmas 2018

This is a good time to reflect on the year just ended and our future together – the committee sends you all their good wishes. May 2019 be an enjoyable and interesting year for everyone.

Looking back – what made the most impression on you? Was it our programme of talks and outings, or taking part in the Huntingdonshire History Festival, or something else? Perhaps you have something you would like to share with us. Please contact the secretary email: mudlark624@gmail.com or speak to any committee member.

For those of you who aren't able to join many activities here's a resumé of a few things that have happened during 2018. The committee and all those who have helped in any way are to be thanked for their contributions and hard work – without volunteers where would we be?

Society News

We continue to offer talks / lectures during the autumn and spring periods and outings during the summer. This year we tried something new – we took part in organising the month long Huntingdonshire History Festival. We began by contributing to the Local History Fair organised by the Library Service. Turn-out there was disappointing but it provided an excuse to update our display material and on the whole Festival events were well supported.

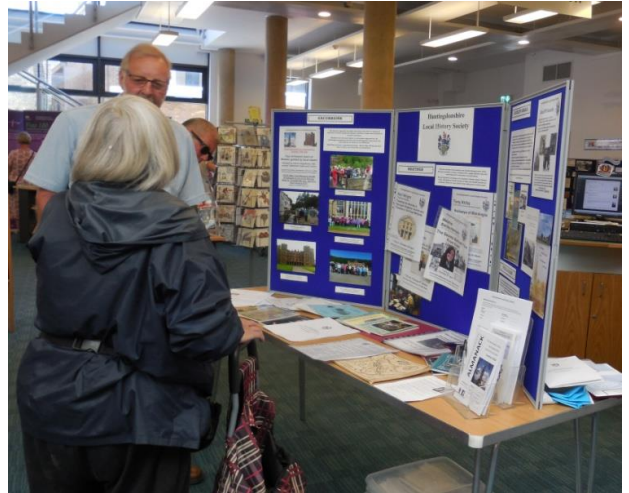


The Opening Ceremony by Jonathan Djanogly,

More than 40 activities - lectures, guided walks, shop-window displays, re-enactments and film shows – and a Civil War re-enactment brought a crowd on the opening day. Were you there?

Plans for the Huntingdonshire History Festival 2019 have begun. It has been agreed to stick to a month-long Festival during July and to have re-enactment events of some kind each Saturday, whether in Huntingdon or elsewhere. Indeed a big effort is being made to spread the concept throughout the district and to engage other museums and village history societies in 'badging' their activities during the month as part of the Festival. Details of events will gel in the next few weeks, but look out for these, or check the Festival's [Facebook page](#), and if you think a local group you are involved with might be interested get them to contact the organisers soon.

On the social front we had an enjoyable coach outing to Boston, where we were treated to a guided tour by Neil Wright, our speaker in April, and to Tattershall Castle. There were also four 'own-transport' visits: to Alconbury Weald, where the developers *Urban and Civic* provided a very good tour including the 'Magic Mountain' control room from the Cold War; to Westminster College and two parish churches in Cambridge, to March (St Wendreda's church, the historic railway station and the Museum) and the third to St Ives (the Roman Catholic Church, followed by a 'behind the scenes tour of the Norris Museum). Some members also joined in on the Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust trip to Rochester, one of several excursions and visits which members are made aware of through our affiliation to the Cambridgeshire Association for Local History and Cambridge Antiquarian Society.



Alan Butler explaining a finer point on one of the guided walks, all of which were fully subscribed.



Committee Activities

A number of changes took place at our Annual Meeting in May. We said 'thank you' to Bridget Flanagan who has been our Minute Taker for some time, and to Pat Jones and

Rosemary Smith who had served as elected members for the last few years; we welcomed Michael Dudley and Stuart Orme, recently appointed curator of the Cromwell Museum as new members of our committee. In September Michael (the present writer) took on the role of Secretary, a post that had been vacant for some years, secretarial activity having been shared amongst the committee.

David Smith is now dealing with subscriptions, but Jean Burbidge continues to look after all other membership matters and welcomes everyone at our lecture meetings and other social occasions.

During the year your committee met formally four times, The main business focused on three topics a) our talks and activities programme;, b) the Goodliff Award Scheme and c) the Huntingdonshire History Festival. We also discussed several other matters some arising from our contact with other organizations, some were quite new issues. We hope you have enjoyed the talks and outings.

The Goodliff Award Scheme was established to encourage individuals and organizations to engage in research or activities that promote an interest in historical matters associated with Huntingdonshire. This is reflected in the awards made in 2018 Of International importance is a high quality magnetometry survey of the Roman town of Durobrivae; two grants were to enable the villages of Elton and Barham to create and publish guides to their buildings and to Alconbury parish church for a children's guide to its activities; another grant was made for a teaching package for schoolchildren visiting the Norris Museum; two were for the production of books that recorded personal experiences during WW2 around Ramsey and abroad during that war. It is hoped that by showing the diversity of projects others will be encouraged to apply for grants in 2019. If you have an idea or are uncertain whether what you are engaged in would qualify please do contact the Awards Administrator, Kate Hadley, - email goodliff.awards@gmail.com .

During the year the society agreed a request to support the newly-formed **Ouse Valley Trust** which wants to have a portion of land adjacent to the River Ouse designated an Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty on grounds of its historic landscape. Regular reports are received, and discussed by the committee, from organisations with similar interests to our own in local history and archaeology. As a result of these contacts we receive invitations to attend lectures, conferences and workshops that they organise. Those attending the Cambridge Antiquarian Society's conference in November, for example, heard about recent archaeological discoveries in Over, Bottisham, Northstowe and Eddington in Cambridge. The conference was a good opportunity to meet people who share our interest in the county we now call 'home', and to buy books and literature on a wide variety of subjects.

Thinking of Archaeology, perhaps you took the opportunity to visit the 'dig' site near The Brampton Hut where remains of an Anglo-Saxon village were discovered. Research by the archaeologists suggested they have found the lost village known to historians as Haughton.

Archives Service

A substantial matter that caught the committee's attention was the temporary closure of the Huntingdonshire Archives searchroom for six months December 2018 – May 2019 to enable staff to concentrate on preparation for the removal of the service's Cambridge counterpart to a new building, currently under construction, at Ely. We were particularly anxious that some provision should continue to be made for people doing Huntingdonshire research. Out of this came a meeting with the Archives Manager, Alan Akeroyd, and the upshot is that the searchroom will be open one day a month during this period. For details see the [Archives Service website](#) or notices in the Library. It shows how positive thinking with some modest financial input from the society can produce real benefits for local historians.

Museums

The Society believes that museums play an important educational role. The next issue will focus be on what they contribute to our understanding of our surroundings, the past and the influences history has on today's life experiences.

How well do you know Huntingdonshire?

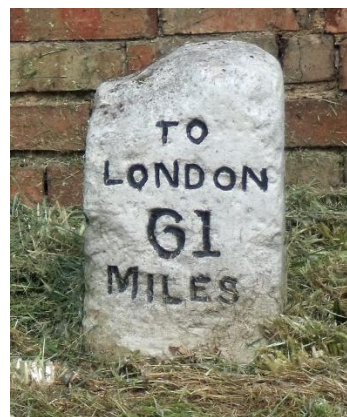
Where might one find these? What are they? (Answer next issue and on our website)



A



B



C

2019 Spring Programme

Full details appeared in the September issue of the *Almanack* and are on our website, <http://www.huntslhs.org.uk/>

Electronic communication is the quickest and most efficient means of exchanging information but this doesn't appeal to everyone; some like to have something to hold, to pin on the family notice board, or spread around for non-members to read. We have always recognised this and sent out printed copies to those who need them and had spare copies to pick up at meetings. Don't hesitate to ask for a printed copy if you want one, and do pass it round your friends. We continue to offer talks / lectures during the autumn and spring periods and outings during the summer.

M.Dudley/HLHS/2018